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from the
Sublime
to the
Ridiculous

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INDIA
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TO THE
RIDICULOUS



ILLUSTRATED



By
(*Mr. and Mrs.*) *W. J. Rogers*

Fourth edition, revised

DS 421

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Preface.

We have no apologies to offer for the following pages. Many of the chapters were written while we were in India, and we were directly connected therewith. They are true to life generally in that land. A number of the articles have appeared in American papers.

At the request of friends, we publish this book.

Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Rogers.

Oct. 1, 1916, Oakland, Calif.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I Americans Complimented	9
II Village Meeting Echoes	12
III A Strange Occurrence	16
IV The Taj Mahal	18
V A Hindu Wedding	23
VI Isaac	30
VII At Lover's Lodge	32
VIII That's What Gets Me	38
IX The Devil in the Well	39
X Officers at Igatpuri	42
XI Superstition Defeated	46
XII Among the Tombs	48
XIII Why She Became Queen	53
XIV Beggars at Igatpuri	55
XV Pardevi	58
XVI The Mistri	62
XVII Hindus' Incineration Ground	70
XVIII Nanahar's Translation	75
XIX The Dhobi	78
XX Little Assuria	85
XXI A Marvel	90
XXII Grinding at the Mill	93
XXIII A Christmas Across the Deep	96
XXIV Bible Scenes in India	100
XXV " " " "	105
XXVI An Old Man's Sacrifice	110

CHAPTER I.

Americans Complimented.

NOT many days ago we were occasioned to go to Bombay and bring supplies for the mission. We went to the station, purchased our ticket, and entered our compartment in the railway carriage where we noticed a dark-faced, heavy set, elderly native sitting in a corner, and took a seat by his side. Conversation ensued. The train left the station and we were soon going at full speed toward our destination. As it takes about three hours to make this journey, it gave us quite a while to talk over some religious and secular subjects.

We were about to finish our colloquy when the aged-faced man looked up into

my face and said, "I judge you are an American missionary, are you not?"

"Yes, my friend, I am."

"Well, sir, I am glad we could make this trip together. I always like to talk to Americans."

"I am glad to hear that, but do you not like to chat with people from other countries?"

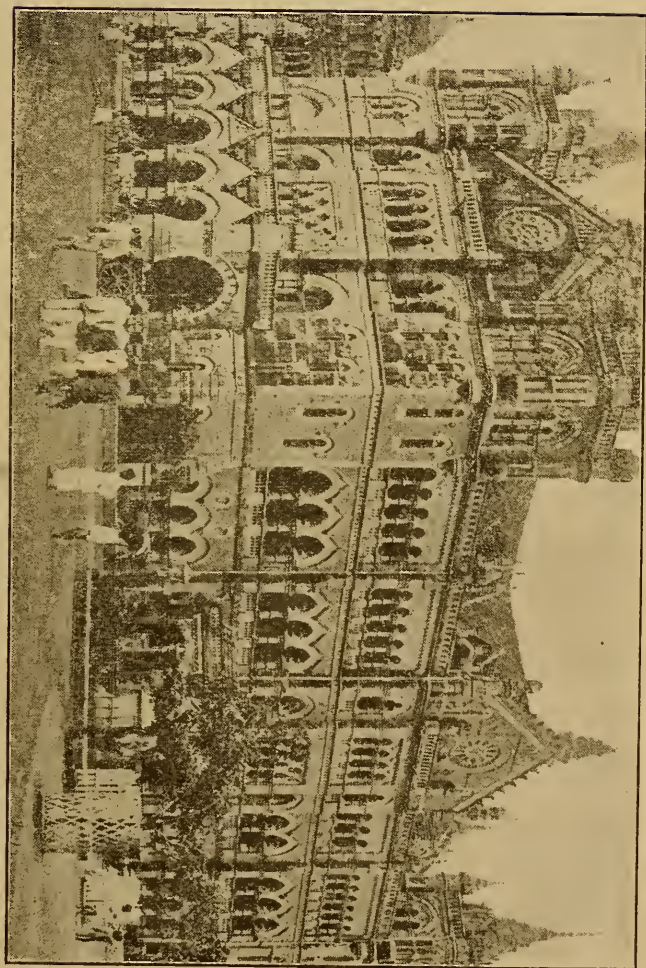
"Oh, yes; but I like Americans best."

"But why do you like them best, may I ask?"

"Well, sir, because I have lived many years and have never known one of them to smoke or swear."

? ? ? ? ?

The train entered Victoria Terminus, which is considered one of the most elaborate railway stations in the world, and we parted, but before parting we gave our new friend an invitation to call at the mission on his return, for which he thanked us and promised to come.



BOMBAY G. I. P. STATTON

CHAPTER II.

Village Meeting Echoes.

WE talk of the “poor ignorant heathen,”—yes, we sing, “The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone,” and this for the most part is true, yet the people of India think, and many think deeply—dig deep down into the depths of their marvelous metaphysics,—men, women and children too, who seem to be born philosophers.

But we grant, there are classes. **En masse**, however, as in this land, are those to whom the question of “What shall we eat and what shall we drink?” are of infinite moment, and yet, beneath it all, they think **some** too, as we have oftentimes proved in a village meeting.

For instance, the man we ran across in our jungle work who was about to conclude to worship the sun. One of the lowest casts, poor, downtrodden—in appearance, not capable of thought beyond that of rice. “But,” says he, “whay you say sounds very good, **padre sahib** (preacher), though the Mohammedan declares he is right; the Brahmins say, ‘Brahm is all, and all is Brahm,’ and you tell us of Jesus Christ, the only Saviour. Whom shall I believe? Why should I bow to any of your prophets? I do not know what to do else I worship the sun. He gives me light, he gives me heat, he makes my grain to grow and thus feeds me. Why should I not worship him?”

Of course, we pointed him beyond the creature to the Creator and he bowed, but no sooner had he done than another volley of questions came from the crowd. “What is the real meaning of the word son?” “In what sense is Jesus the son of God?” Can God have a son in mortal shape?”

We answer: Christ did not first become the Son of God when he assumed a mortal

shape. He was the Son of God from all eternity; not in a physical sense, but as the object and reciprocator of the Father's love.

Returning again to our message, some one quickly catches up another thread of it. "You say Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three in one. Can that great one be divided? If not, why not?" And still we answer, "God is spirit and how can you divide spirit?" Seeing the point, "Agreed," shouts out one from another direction, "We cannot divide spirit." This is according to Vedanthic philosophy, though they have yet to really find the relation of matter to spirit. However, they argue, "There is only one great entity existent and that is a sort of vague, misty, impersonal substance—spirit. All else is delusion. Everything we can sense, even our own existence and individuality is a mere mirage, a shadow. Just as the virtual images of the sun reflect in thousands of bodies of water, so are the souls of men unreal, and only illusionary reflections of the one eternal soul,—the One who fills all space and pervades all beings. No

human **ego**. I do not exist for the thing I call I is only an infinitesimal drop in the sea of infinitude. When we arrive at this conviction we disappear from view, absorbed into the one original." Hence the idea that there is no sin, since all apparent action is unreal. No sin, no salvation, for what need of a Saviour?

Oh! how sickening all this. Surely nothing less than the power of the Holy Spirit can convince men and women with such views, of sin and their need of a Saviour. But we remember the preaching of the cross is not without effect, and we continue to tell the story, for there are some that have never heard; and right there that eventide were some standing and asking, "Where is your Lord and Christ now?" whose pleading countenances the plaint of Job, "Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat." We reply, "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him that is of a contrite heart," and some find him—yes, really find him whose eye runneth to and fro through the whole earth.

In some places whole villages have turned to the Saviour. We know one missionary whom three decades back, the Methodists called the white horse of the conference there, because he had so little success, but recently he won a whole village to the Saviour, and unlike so many missions in India, the converts largely support the work, Ps. 2:8.

CHAPTER III.

A Strange Occurrence.

SEVERAL days ago a young man friend of ours needing some change, asked his mother for one rupee, whereupon she brought the amount and laid it on their table. After a short conversation, both mother and son left

the room and a little later returned to get the rupee, when behold, it had vanished!

During their absence there had been no one in the room save a Hindu who was employed as a servant, and he was speedily summoned into account.

"Boy, where is that rupee we left on the table?"

The servant replied, "**Ham ko ne ata,**" which literally says, "It does not come to me," meaning he did not know.

"Yes, you do, boy. Now, tell the truth."

"No, I don't," he rejoined, "and if I do, I'll lose one of my fingers before morning."

Nothing more was said. The servant was sent on an errand to the bazaar. On his return to the bungalow, a dog came running after him and bit off one of his fingers. The young fellow was much frightened and ran to the bungalow with his hand paining and bleeding, confessing his theft.

A strange occurrence, yet ever and anon sin will out, for has not God said, "Be sure your sin will find you out?"

CHAPTER IV.

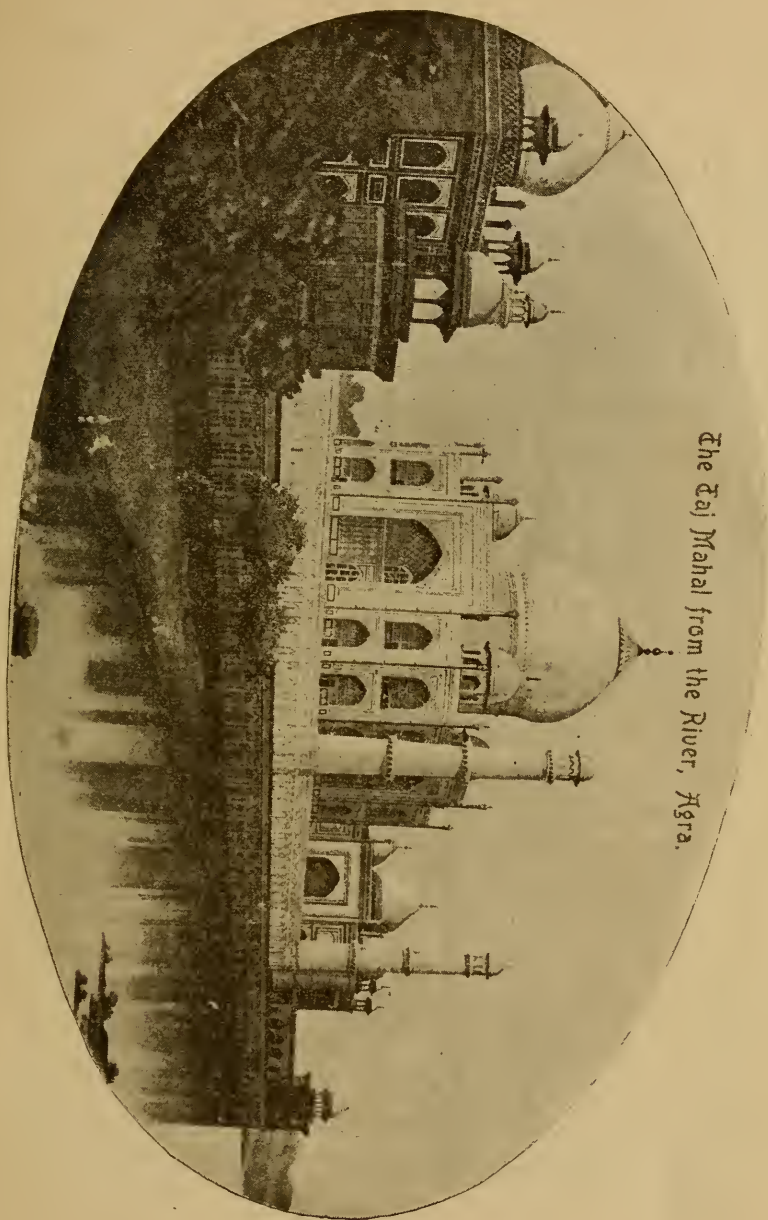
The Taj Mahal.

THE Taj Mahal—that wonderful star of architecture—at one time rated as one of the seven wonders of the world and may be yet for aught I know. Here it stands, a great glare of grandeur. The beauty is perhaps most perfect immediately after sunset or under the moonlight, but every change of light seems to lend new graces to it.

It is a great white marble sepulchre, the tomb of the Pride of the palace, as we read in Indian literature; however, the king Shah Jehan, who erected the monument to his wife, lies there also.

Mumtaz-i-Mahal was the grand-daughter of a Persian who came to India to seek his fortune, and finally rose to power in that land. She was married to Shah Jehan at an early age and died when the

The Taj Mahal from the River, Agra.



eighth child was born. They laid her in the garden where the Taj stands until the mausoleum was built. According to Tavernier, who records that he saw both the commencement and the completion, the Taj cost over ten million dollars, and it took seventeen thousand men twenty-two years to build it. It is made of white marble excepting what is inlaid with precious stones, and doors here and there which were silver but later were replaced in sandal wood.

Marble screens, so delicately sculptured as to represent a most beautiful net work of lace, surround the tombs. The central marble platform on which the tomb stands is 18 feet high and 313 feet square. At each corner is a minaret of white marble 137 feet high. The tomb itself measures 186 feet on each side. The height of the walls and parapet over them is 108 feet. At each corner above them rise smaller marble domes, and on the center soars the great central dome which rises to a height of 187 feet, the metal pinnacle adding yet 30 feet to the whole.

As we walked into this dome, a guide called out, "**Allah**," the Mohammedan's word for God. The echo floated round and round the walls and gradually rose higher and higher, fainter and fainter, until after about five minutes it seemed to pass out through the top of the dome in the smallest whisper. Even a whisper in the dome travels at a great rate and reminds one of the Scripture, telling us that "what is whispered in secret shall be proclaimed on the housetop."

All the spandrels of the Taj, all the angles and more important details are heightened by being inlaid with precious stones. These are combined in wreaths and scrolls and frets exquisite in design and beautiful in color. They form the most unique and precious style of ornamentation ever adopted in architecture. This mode of ornamentation is lavishly bestowed on the tombs themselves. They pointed out to us the place in one of the inlaid designs on the Queen's tomb, from which the British took the diamond that we saw in the crown of Queen Victoria, then ruler of England.

We could write and write and yet no pen can describe a visit to the Taj, for in our visit all around the world and through the different countries of earth, there is nothing in architecture that we found to compare in beauty and grandeur with this wonderful mausoleum.



CHAPTER V.

A Hindu Wedding.

FROM before sunrise in the morning until after midnight, the drums have been beating and the bagpipes have not ceased to peal forth their peculiar melody. We see the people running to and fro in the village street carrying green branches, and stopping in front of Mochi's place of business, for Mochi is a shoemaker. With these branches and some sticks, they are erecting a sort of an arbor which projects part way across the street.

As drums and horns and most any and every kind of music and noises are common at feasts, shows, and the burial or burning of the dead, we think all this



CATCHING TODDY

tamasha so far nothing strange; but as various other things take place one after another and all at the same time, our curiosity is aroused and we ask, "What is going on at the shoe shop?"

The answer comes from our always well-informed **ayah** (native nurse), for she is ever the village gossip, "A Hindu wedding." Being the first we had heard of at our station since our arrival in this wonderland of the East, we could not refrain from asking the privilege to attend, and were gladly granted the same.

Here we go. "Shall we be in time?" Well, as it lasts for several days, we shall be in time for some of it at least; and I should like you to see it with us.

We arrive at the bungalow and hear shouts, singing and the same old music rolling on. A group of women and girls are in the rear of the scene, while men and boys make merry out under the arbor. All sit on the ground, which serves the purpose of a floor in India, especially among the common and lower castes. The men are drinking a light-colored liquid and from the way they act, I am inclined to

think it is some strong drink. (Prov. 20: 21.)

A certain native discovers the American guests standing near the doorway and welcomes us with smiles and kind words, though we can scarcely hear what he says, owing to the musicians going at full speed, who have evidently espied us also and are displaying their skill.

After a short interview, our friend calls the father of the bridegroom, who seems to be boss of the whole affair—I presume it is because he pays the bills, and I must add, these are costly days. Indeed, weddings mean many days—yes, years of hard labor, and oftentimes more than the savings of a lifetime are spent in a single day for the occasion. The cost varies considerably. Some spend one hundred rupees, while others spend many times that amount. A continual feast is carried on for days. Opium and intoxicants are greatly indulged in, and an elaborate display of fireworks is expected.

However, the father reaches us, throws up his hands and begins to shake his fists, the result of which reminds one of a throt-

tle on a railway engine,—as soon as the throttle is moved, the train begins to “slow up.” Almost immediately the noise was hushed.

“Would you like to have your pictures taken?” we asked, for we had taken our camera with us. “Whatever is your wish, sir,” he replied. So arrangements were made, and before we got through, the whole multitude wanted to be photographed—quite unlike the jungle folks, who, when we turned our camera upon them, took to their heels lest they should be killed. There were father, brothers, uncles, aunts, in fact, as aforesaid, all the wedding guests march into the street and a picture is taken and nobody injured.

To the right stands the father; near the center is a young man with a **chadar**, a piece of cloth draped in the shape of a cross over his breast. This is the bridegroom with his bride, a little girl of about nine years old, at his right.

She wears a red **sari** (dress) decorated with white fancy work; a necklace worth twenty-one rupees (seven dollars) around her neck; four rings on her toes,

two in each ear, silver bracelets on her arms and wrists, and a large nosegay. She appears quite fancy in her bridal habiliment, which has been given her by the bridegroom.

Look at her—a mere child, with many responsibilities of a full grown person. The ceremony was officially performed the third day of the feast, but the wedding is not yet over and three days have passed since then. She has not been allowed to rest since the first day of her wedding—she nor her husband.

But the great day of her life is on—in India as in America—the day all girls look forward to—the wedding day. Yet, alas, how vastly different! The consent of the parties vitally interested in this marriage and most others here has never as much as been thought of nor considered. Perhaps having never met before the wedding day, they take each other for better, for worse because of their parent's agreement in the matter.

As for love, the rule in India is, “Marry first and love will come after;” and generally speaking, it does, at any rate, on

the side of the young wife, who is said to be the essence of devotion to her lord and master.

“Her faith is fixt and cannot move,
She darkly feels him great and wise,
And dwells on him with faithful eyes,
‘I cannot understand: I love.’ ”



CHAPTER VI.

Isaac.

ISAAC is industrial after the oriental method,—that is to say, he is always doing something, but is economical of energy rather than time.

If there are more ways than one in doing a thing, he has an unerring instinct which guides him to choose the one that costs the least trouble. He is a fatalist in philosophy, and this helps him too, for in transplanting a rose bush, he breaks off the root to save him the trouble of digging deeper, for—if the plant is to live, it



will live; if it is to die, it will die, for do not some plants live and some plants die? This is when Isaac serves as a **mallee**.

Yes; some plants live and some plants die, but more disappear—and when I mention the matter to Isaac, he treats me as a dreamer of dreams and declares we never had such. However, I find out later that he carries on a small nursery and seed business of his own; so decide to let him go.

CHAPTER VII.

At Lover's Lodge.

YES, here we are, where "the spicy breezes blow soft o'er Ceylon's Isle,"—back in a grove of coconut palms—Lover's Lodge they call it, and well-named it is, for one feels as though he would like to spend the rest of his life here, after the long, wearisome journey out from England.

We spring from the rickshas with delight; a Singhalese servant meets us at the door and directs us into the spacious drawing room. These are the first few hours we have spent on land since going ashore at Suez, and how refreshing it is! The host and hostess are very pleasant, and make everything as delightful as

possible for us. He is a government official and relates many deeply interesting incidents of life here.

How strange it all seems! Truly, we are in a different world, we think, after our *tete-a-tete* especially, and filled with wonder, we retire to our room where we anticipate sleeping once again in a bed that stands still. This night we are not to be "rocked in the cradle of the deep," where we so often failed to 'lay us down in peace to sleep,' for indeed, we had awful storms at sea, tossed about at a terrible rate in a condemned vessel; actually lost for three hours, and when the Captain got his bearings, which were determined by a certain star that appeared toward morning, we found ourselves just off the island of Perim where the poor China sank. Only a little while and we saw her mast rising out of the water.

At such a time one cannot help being reminded of Pat's answer when he was asked which he would rather be in,—a wreck on land or at sea. After thoughtfully scratching his head, he replied: "Faith, and I should prefer to be in a

wreck on land, for then, there you are; but, and if you are in a wreck and go to the bottom of the sea, then where you are?"

But I must not dwell on that dreadful night for we are now preparing to retire



COLOMBO STREET SCENE

and are soon in bed, right in the veranda window, where fresh, cool air comes pouring in—happy, content, ready for dream-land, when we feel a strange sensation in our limbs. What a queer streak our cir-



THE COBRA

culatation has taken! Reminds one of blood trickling through some lower vein of the limb. Surely it will pass off soon, we think, when behold! it becomes violent and even more violent, till we are alarmed—and finally such a wriggle comes that we do not take time to think farther or conclude, but out through the mosquito netting which has so quietly tucked us in for the night, we find ourselves upon a chair shouting out to the rest of the house to come and see what is in the bed.

The hostess comes smiling through the door, for true to the Orient, nothing worries her.

“I forgot to tell you to watch for snakes,” said she. “They are common with us here,” and walking over to the bed, they saw the fellow crawling out along under the sheet, making for the veranda window—yes, that very window which we appreciated so much upon retirement. Needless to add, that we had bad dreams that night whenever we took time to dream. Oh, that wriggle! We shall never forget it; and even though

“all the world does love a lover,” we must say in warning, that there may be things about any lover’s lodge that are not altogether lovable, especially in this part of the world. It seems that there is ever something lurking around the corner seeking your life. **Ne fronti crede.**

CASTE MARKS.



I.



II.



III.



IV.



V.



VI.



VII.



VIII.

I, II, III, IV, Followers of Vishnu.
 V, VI, VII, VIII, " " Siva.

CHAPTER VIII.

“That’s What Gets Me.”

NOT long since, a missionary friend of ours while on his way to our station, met a Brahmin, and during the course of their conversation, he approached the subject of Christianity.

The Brahmin remarked that he had been educated in a Christian mission school and had learned much of the Bible.

At this our friend asked the high-caste Hindu (for that is what a Brahmin is) what he thought of Jesus Christ.

The Brahmin said: “Of course, I do not believe in Jesus Christ as you Christians do, but I must confess he did some things I cannot but think about.”

“May I ask what some of them are?” queried our friend.

“Yes,” replied the Brahmin, “you know when they went to kill him, he said, ‘Father, forgive them.’ That’s what gets me.”

CHAPTER IX.

The Devil in the Well.

IN OUR mission compound we have three wells. Two of these are very shallow and do not amount to very much. If they did, they would probably have some history like the third one which is in our front yard, a little to the right of the front door of the bungalow.

Several years ago a few natives were hired to dig the “front well,” agreeing faithfully to dig it wide and deep, and give the owner a fine one so he might

have water the year round and not suffer lack during the dry season.

The work is begun. They dig about two feet down and find nothing but rock. At this discovery they bring crowbars, dynamite, etc. I might say right here that our India folks have not modern improvements on every line; in fact, most everything is done in a primitive manner. We dig through rock with muscles and crowbars; blast by attaching a lighted candle to the end of a long stick or pole so as to reach from a distance the powder for the process.

The combat is on. Pounding and blasting are heard. Pieces of rock ascend and lay on the surface of the ground above. After days of labor, the workmen reach a depth of about fifteen feet when all of a sudden the noise ceases, and they are climbing out of the well.

"Why are you not working?" asks the owner of the place.

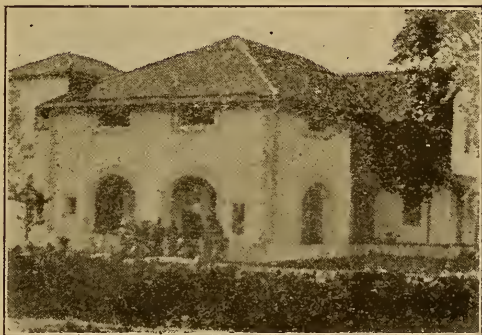
"O Sahib, devil in the well!"

"You men go to work and keep your contract. There is nothing of the kind in the well."

“Oh yes, there is, Sahib. We have dug until we have come to flint rock and that is a sign that **Shaitan** (Satan) is in the well.”

“I must have it deeper and if you do not work, what shall I do?”

“We will work, Sahib; but we must



THE BUNGALOW

first go and offer sacrifice to our gods.”

“Very well, go. Don’t be long.”

“We won’t be long, Sahib: but you must give us a cock and a lamb for the sacrifice.”

“Nay, nay; I’ll never give you nor anyone else such things for offerings to stone and wooden gods,” concludes the Sahib,

and the men leave—yes, leave—and to this day the old well stands as it was then left. We have explored the bottom of it and find dirt, old tin, rags and all sorts of filth; but the only life, however, that we ran across was in frogs, eels and numerous flies and insects.

The devil is not in the well; he resides in the millions of stony hearts and wells that hold not the “living water.”

CHAPTER X.

Officers at Igatpuri.

HINDUSTAN not only has her beggars, naked, half-starved, illiterate people, but also possesses officials, well-clad, well-fed and educated folk. Here we have a picture of the officers at Igatpuri, for you.

The two men holding canes, sitting in the front row, are the magistrate and his assistant, who are the chief officers. The registrar, chief constables, pleaders, municipal secretary and land clerk make up the rest of that row.

The second is composed of court clerks, and in the third row are the armed police and court peons.

The learned men of this country, such as seen on the front row, are probably the most difficult class to deal with on religious lines. We wonder not at the statement of Rev. W. T. Walker, who said he had to deal with "men of keen powers of intellect, whose subtle reasoning made one look at the foundation of one's own faith."

Passing strange, is it not, that men of this rank should believe in and worship idols? But we remember "not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise."

These officers carry on about the same kind of work as those of our homeland.



OFFICERS AT IGATPURI

They rank from the lowest to the highest caste, but all intermingle in business. Some of them feel as important over their offices as some other folks we know of, and put on as many "airs" as some of our English officials.

As we neared the courtyard a few days ago we noticed one of these men with a sort of a red silk robe on. We started toward him, but how quickly he vanished from our sight! Upon inquiry, we learned that he had just taken a religious bath which rendered him quite pure and holy, according to his views, and as he feared we might come in touch with and in some way pollute him, he hastened away as he did not want to bother with another ablution that morning.

CHAPTER XI.

Superstition Defeated.

ONE day when one of our native preachers was in the bazaar, a high-caste Hindu challenged him to make a trip to Ghoti, a village about five miles distant, on a full moonlight or a "full dark" night. The high-caste promised the preacher ten rupees if he accepted and carried out this challenge.

Let it be understood that the majority of Hindus believe Satan is out on very light or dark nights to injure the **kali log** (black people); therefore, they believe it dangerous to stroll at length under these conditions.



The challenge, nevertheless, is accepted with the understanding that the acceptor is to go to Ghoti on the coming night and call on a certain other Hindu, from whom he is to bring a letter stating the fact that he has made the midnight visit.

Night came. It was intensely dark, but the preacher lighted his lantern and started on his ten-mile journey. He arrived at Ghoti about midnight, made the required visit and returned to Igatpuri at three o'clock in the morning. The high-caste was awakened; evidence was given that the challenge had been carried out. The Hindu lost his ten rupees, and the devil failed to catch the preacher of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XII.

Among the Tombs.

AMONG the places frequented by visitors who come to Igatpuri, is the Mohammedans' cemetery. It is quite different from the burning ghat where nothing can be seen after a funeral service except an ash heap. Here we find bodies stored away in tombs. The white monuments over these tombs, which are erected in memory of the departed, give the place a modern aspect.

These often have an ornamental design, but inscriptions, which go to make up a place of this kind in the homeland, are one of the missing links here. It would be difficult and next to impossible to do any engraving or use the chisel on these

stones, for the inner composition is only mud dried or burned in the fire, which is afterwards slightly coated with cement and whitewashed. Of course, during the rains the whitening washes off, but as the cool season is ushered in, they are whitened again.

As we write, we are reminded again of our Saviour's words, "Whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness."

On the northwest corner of this plot of land is a native house with three rooms. One room is used for storing implements and tools; another, the center room, is for the public to use for drinking, smoking, eating opium or anything else, sleeping, and for the purpose of offering special prayers to the devil. The third room is the quarters of two men who wait upon the visitors and give information as to where the dead are buried. Both of them are **darweshes** and lead what is called a holy life. One is quite old and worships the devil. If a Mohammedan has a demon, he visits this devil worshipper and inquires what he shall do to be relieved.

At this request, the old man goes and gets a book, which he has filled with his own hand-writing, and reads from it in Hindustani in a sort of a buzzing manner, then tells the inquirer he can capture the demon for him.

Of course, the poor, deluded fellow asks what he shall do. The reply is heard, "Bring me some limes (small lemons), some camphor, a stick of incense and some money."

'Tis brought. The old man burns the camphor and incense, takes a lime in his hand and prays to the devil, after which he passes the lime to the inquirer and tells him to take it home and put it in his bed, near the head, and the devil will flee. If this promise comes to pass according to the inquirer's mind, he makes the second gift.

Some people take copper or brass lockets and have the old man write something on a bit of paper, which they enclose therein. They then string the locket around their necks, with the belief that no evil spirit can harm them. Others, instead of putting the writing in the locket,

enclose a bit of pig's hair, believing this to have the same effect in frightening devils away.

Among the tombs there is a plot where nothing can be seen excepting four old wooden posts, which serve as legs to hold up a covering made of corrugated iron. Under this covering lies the body of a priest, who requested that no tombstone be erected over his grave, and told the people that whosoever might desire anything after his death, they might come to his grave and worship him and he would grant their desires.

Under one of the trees one will notice a large jar which contains water. On top is a small cup used in dipping water from the jar and filling the tins that can be seen on the box.

The Mohammedans use these tins of water in washing their mouths, hands and feet after they have buried a body, being very particular to thus purify themselves before entering the house.

When we visited these grounds, we were welcomed by **darweshes**, who took great pride as well as care in showing us

around. We had just finished our visit when it began to rain, and we were invited to come into the house—that center room. A number of people were preparing opium to smoke. Sitting down on a mat which lay on the floor, we began to preach Christ, a Saviour for all.

They listened well to the Gospel news, but what the outcome of that message will be in the hearts of these opium fiends and devil worshippers, we know not. We leave that with the many other questions attendant our service for the Master “until the day dawn and shadows flee away.”



CHAPTER XIII.

Why She Became Queen.

EVERYTHING great and good in Hindustan has some traditional origin as does every atrocity and absurdity. One of the famous traditions concerns the late queen of England, viz: why she was so good and kind. It is supposed that in years ago she was a frog, and the story of her transmigration is this:

A wealthy king and his servants were tiger shooting in the jungles. At camp one day they left a **deksha** (pan) of milk open, which a cobra espied and crept into,

quite concealing his deadly presence. A frog sat near by and became much troubled, for she thought of how the king, when he returned weary and thirsty, would go to drink the milk and be attacked by the cobra.

Pondering how to save the king's life, the happy thought seized her to jump into the milk just as she should see him coming. This, she knew, would end her life, for the frog is considered unclean, and of course, her presence would defile the milk and the king upon seeing her in it, would angrily dash the milk, herself and all to the ground.

And so he did, but upon seeing the cobra spring from the bottom of the **deksha**, he shuddered at the thought of how near death's clutches he had been, and instead of further cursing the frog for what he at first thought a dastardly deed, quite understanding her motive and appreciating her sacrifice of life for him, poured forth blessings upon her, and said she should become a great and good queen, and such she became.

CHAPTER XIV.

Beggars at Igatpuri.

HERE they come! Who are they? They are the lame, the halt, the sick and the blind. They vary in size as well as age. Some are mere babes facing a life of poverty and misery, while others are in old age and have eked out a mere existence to the present and will until death comes to relieve them.

How did they become halt, lame and blind? Some were born that way and others were made so by their parents in order to excite sympathy. Being in this condition, some are compelled to carry sticks or crutches, others are crawling on their hands and other parts of their

bodies. This is a horrible sight! Surely we have "the poor with us."

How filthy! Half naked—yes, many of them more than half and this is the cool season. A soldier's wife just out from England, exclaimed to a missionary, "My, how these people dress!" and the missionary responded, "My, how they don't dress!"

Did you say they had vermin? Yes, and plenty. As they approach, we notice that a couple of them have fallen out of line. One sits on the ground while the other extricates the live stock from the field of hair. Shortly this execution is ended and these with the rest of the crowd have entered the mission compound. They gather at one corner of the bungalow and are ready for service. The meeting opens with a song something like this:

Jai, jai, jai! Masih ki jai,
Maslub jo hua hai;
Be-hadd hai uska p'yar ajib,
Jai, jai! Masih ki jai.

In substance they are singing: To Jesus is the victory. He was crucified for

us. Surely his love is wonderful. After the song, a missionary offers prayer and then comes the message. While that is being given, some seem more inclined to fight than listen; however, the preacher stills his congregation and finishes his discourse. Now questions are asked and answered, and they are dealt with in regard to their souls.

Lastly, the rice question is on. Not all are given rice—only those who are disabled, and they receive one cup each, after which they return to their shelter provided by the towns-people. Some of them have accepted Christ as their Saviour, and with these, others have abandoned their caste ideas and labor with their hands, making an honorable living.

CHAPTER XV.

Pardevi.

AMONG the twelve villages visited by our mission is Pardevi. It is a small willage with, perhaps, not much over fifty inhabitants, and is situated on a large rock on the northeastern slope of one of the peaks of the Western ghats, about three miles from the mission.

Although not far distant, yet on account of its rough and crooked path, it takes as much time and strength to reach it as it does those of a greater distance. There is no wagon road leading to it—nothing but a narrow footpath filled with rocks, and during the monsoons that is crossed by numerous rivulets. In some

places it is almost perpendicular and so narrow that two persons can hardly pass each other. As we come to the summit of this mountain path, we are invariably ready for a rest, and after taking that, we go down a steep incline and on through what is known as "tiger jungle."

This jungle is filled with gloom. After one enters he cannot see much of anything but animals, reptiles, shrubbery, and the sky above. The tiger frequents this jungle during the hot season when water is scarce. Only recently a doctor from England shot a tiger in it. The hooded cobra, India's king of snakes, a most venomous viper, has his den here also. We often see him on our journey to and from the village.

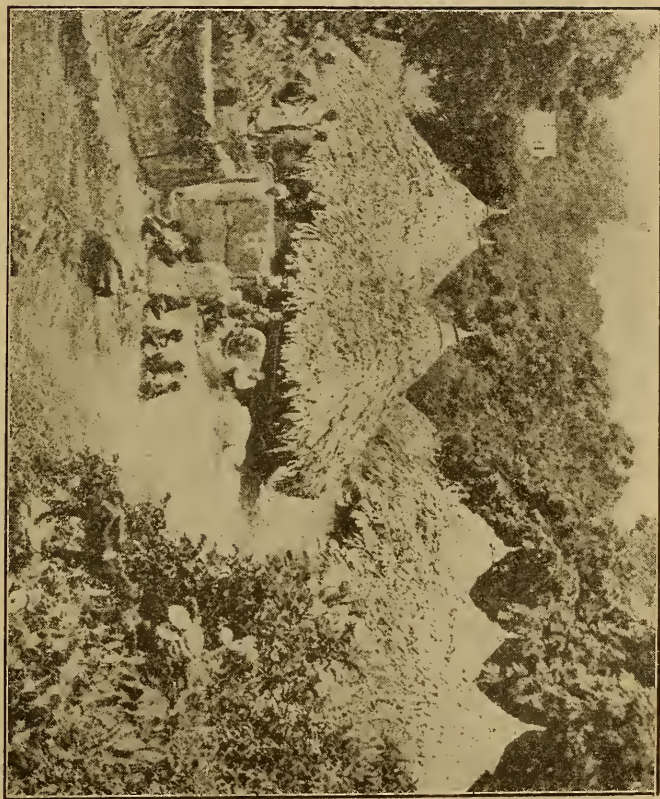
It is generally about eight o'clock in the morning when we arrive at Pardevi. The meetings are opened with song while the natives gather. Usually there are about thirty-five at the service. There would be more but generally some are working in the field or caring for the buffaloes. All that attend listen eagerly, as a rule, and ask many questions about our religion.

The first time we went to this village, we began our meeting near an old wood pile, when an elderly native invited us into an old Hindu temple. The invitation was accepted. We entered and found it empty with the exception of a remnant of a stone god. From that first visit, which was many months ago, we have used this temple for Gospel services.

Pardevi is one of the most receptive villages we are evangelizing. They feel the need of a faith that offers more to man than theirs does.



NATIVE VILLAGE



CHAPTER XVI.

The Mistri.

THE MISTRI, and surely he is a mystery in very fact. We tried to do without him more than once, but like so many other things in this world, he seems to be a necessary evil at times in India. However, evil or no evil (as unlikely as the latter may be) he is necessary and we must not be ironical. He is to be appreciated, indeed.

Well, there are mistries and mistries. There are some that when we get them, we can do nothing but dismiss them, and this is not only hard on them, but a discount to ourselves as well; for every dismissal weakens our position, and in the morning conference in the bazaar among

AN INDIA KITCHEN



the servants, none holds so low a place as the **sahib** (master or gentleman) who has had five cooks in six months. In fact, he who parts with his servants lightly can scarcely retain a good servant. Only loafers will come to him and he must pay them a good price.

But they come—some one, always—as soon as it is found out the **sahib** is in need of a mistri.

Here is Rama, a jack of all trades, whom we afterward employed as **mallee**, **dhambar-wallah** and most any other kind of a **wallah** (**wallah** meaning most anything here) that we needed, for whatsoever we needed on the line of a servant, Rama dressed to suit the occasion and appeared before us for the position; always ready for work but never had any, at least, for long at a time—even if he should, he was ever for finding an easier place. Poor Rama! he was not a tile short in the upper story when it came to lying, stealing, shirking, and so on; in fact, **nulli secundus** in all these graces (?) characteristic of the Hindu. But to look at him, he was a most unsuspecting crea-

ture, whether he appeared as a Hindu, Christian or Mohammedan, for indeed, he was whichever suited his convenience **pro tem**.

However, we found we could ill afford to keep him, so along came the prophet-looking old Mohammedan with his whiskers dyed in red, signifying he had made a pilgrimage to Mecca, visited the **kaaba** stone and paid his rites to Mohammed. He does very well as a cook, but all of a sudden one day he flies into a rage at the **bheesti** (a Hindu water carrier) which culminates in his chasing him all around the place, with the carving knife, after which he ushers himself into the presence of the mistress of the house and informs her that he is quite ready to beat every servant on the place, gesticulates in such a manner as to include her ladyship and the **sahib** also, if his honor required it.

Of course, he leaves, and a Goanese comes on the scene. This descendent of Goa wears a black coat, with continuations of checked jail cloth, and a hat which he removes at the gate as he enters the compound. He has good **chits** (recommendations), but despite those, we know

that Christmas has a certain fatality for him—and then, too, his cardinal vice is cruelty, not the passive Asiatic cruelty either, but that ferocious brand which generally marks an infusion of European blood. True, it is rather a weak infusion after having filtered through so many generations, but it shows itself in one way and another, especially in the torture of crows and in the killing of chickens by the inches. With all this intelligence, we hardly care to try him, but we do even though he soon disappears.

Next comes the Madrassee with his spherical turban, and his remarkable command of English. He is supposed to prepare that famous luxury, “Madras curry,” and we engage him.

He appears neat as the average, but that is not saying much. His studio is fitted with a few small fire places, and furnished with copper **dekshas** (pots or pans), a chopper, some tin spoons, a coconut shell ladle on the end of a stick, a curry-stone, a rickety table whose undulating surface is chopped, hacked and scarred, besmeared, begrimed, and

stained with all sorts of juices. On this he minces meat, chops onions, raisins, rolls out his pastry and sleeps. He has always to make toast for breakfast, which operation he performs by holding the bread between his great and next great toe, up to the fire to brown.

He uses many tea towels or dusters as we call them here, but the most common in use is the tail of his shirt, which he always conveniently wears outside his pantaloons.

Though he has a table, he persistently washes the dishes on the earthen floor, never using any soap, but a handful of earth or most any kind of dirt now and again during the process. Truly, the poet is right when he says:

“Where ignorance is bliss,
’Tis folly to be wise,”

and especially, when we consider the cook-house. To think of the nice looking dishes the average cook can set before one from such a kitchen, makes us marvel. One can never tell what process the food has gone through before it reaches the



THE BHEESTI

table. No matter what gets into it in the way of filth, insects, worms, etc., so long as it can be strained out.

But before laying the pen down, we must tell you of a certain Englishman who had just found a treasure of a cook. The English are very fond of good coffee, and this particular one was telling his friend about the delicious drink his cook could prepare, and invited him over to sample it.

He came. The coffee with some biscuits was ordered. After the usual time elapsed, in came the cook with the air of any of his kind.

The guest tasted the coffee and exclaimed:

“Fancy! How delicious! Simply superb! How does he make it, pray?”

The host called the cook, saying, “Boy, tell the gentleman how you prepared the coffee.”

Of course, this touched his vein of pride and he began in his pidgin English:

“Me takes some water and puts the coffee into it, and me biles and biles it. Then me break one egg into it, and then

'istrain it thro' my master's sock—and,—and,"

"What?" shouted the Master,—
"what?" and ere he could go farther, the
cook cried out consolingly, "O sahib, it
was a dirty one, it was a dirty one."

CHAPTER XVII.

Hindus' Incineration Ground.

IN INDIA we have more than one way
of disposing of the dead. Some are
burned, some are laid on towers to be
devoured by vultures, some are buried
and some are thrown into deep wells.

The Hindus burn; yet not all of them.
Only the Brahmin (priest caste), **banyah**

(grain dealer), **deshmuk** (warrior) and the Marathi (coppersmith, goldsmith, etc.) are allowed to burn, and that is with the provision that they are married. This rule stands good regardless of age. Years ago when human sacrifice was in vogue, when a priest died, his wife was burned alive with his corpse.

You will excuse us if we take a look into the home of a dying Hindu, who, in a few hours will be dead and carried to the burning ghat. It is said that he would not be dying were he not possessed of a demon, and the process to get rid of the demon is begun. It would be bad, indeed, should he die in demon possession. Instead of sending for a doctor, they summon the devil catcher.

He solemnly enters the home and after some deliberation, requests that sweetmeats, chicken, cocoanuts, red cloth, and two or three rupees be put into the basket. This he takes and tosses three or four times in front of the dying man, claiming to have power to persuade the demon to take his departure and go and have a square meal.

The basket, with its contents, is ordered to be taken to the jungles or wherever the devil catcher may suggest. After an hour or so, he tells some one to go and see if the sweetmeats, etc., are in the basket. They go and invariably the basket is found empty.

During the hour or two that has intervened the devil catcher has employed another of his caste to go and empty the basket. The relatives of the dying man, however, are ignorant of this, and seeing the food gone, believe the demon has taken his flight and gone to have a meal,—therefore, the afflicted will “die good,” as they express it.

Death comes. The remains are placed on a bamboo carry-all, and by the aid of four men, borne to the place of cremation.

Wood and oil are taken for the fire. If relatives can afford it, oftentimes **ghi**, a sort of clarified butter, is used with the oil. On top of the pile of wood the corpse is carefully laid. Whatever oil or grease they have is now poured on the heap, and it is ready for the match and flames. Who will start the fire? If the departed has

left a son, he will do it; if there are two or more sons, it falls to the lot of the eldest. Should there be no sons, the oldest brother performs it, and if no brother, then the wife; and if no wife, then the nearest remaining relative.

At any rate, the fire is started. Flames ascend high in the air. This makes quite a sight, especially when it takes place at night. Not long ago, one evening at about nine o'clock, we could see the mentioned flames from our rear mission window.

Those attending a cremation service are supposed to stay till the head bursts open; then go and wash in a well or river, else perhaps, the town tank. In Igatpuri, they stay the proper time, then rush for the tank located near the municipal school, and have a bath.

The relatives must now stay in the house for ten days. After that, the ashes of the corpse are thrown in the river. Hurrah for a big dinner! As everything demandent on them in connection with this death, has been accomplished, they believe they must have a feast or Mahadev (a heathen god) will become angry

with them, and they will never get to the Hindus' heaven, which is commonly supposed to be **Nirvana**, a state of non-existence. The highest state of being is not to be, they think.

Every year, the first day after the new moon in August, they gather at the cremation ground and eat **chapatties** (unleavened cakes or bread), **dhal** (lentil seed or pulse) and rice in memory of these occasions.

A striking incident took place with a very stout man who died near us. When his body was taken to be burned, his relatives bought fifteen gallons of kerosene oil and the same amount of **ghi** and used for the fire. The fire became extremely hot; the burning body sat up amid the flames and shortly after, came rolling out toward the bewildered, frightened crowd, for they thought the dead had come to life. At this crisis, they took to their heels and left the burning corpse to himself.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Nanahar's Translation.

NANAHAR, a boy nine years of age, who has been an active little worker in one of our Sunday schools, has recently gone to glory. He was taken ill on Thursday night, with a high fever and passed away on the following Saturday.

The last Sunday he attended Sunday school he seemed extra cheerful and was anxious to quote the golden text of the lesson, which ran thus: "In my father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

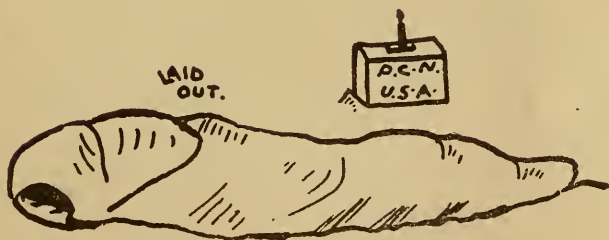
This boy was unusually bright, and truly a worker for Jesus. He was among

the first to go out into the streets and gather others into the Sunday school. Less than a day before he passed away he said, "I will take six new boys to Sunday school next Sunday."

When the news came to the mission that Nanahar had gone, sorrow filled our hearts. We went to his home and there laid the little lifeless form with nothing but a piece of thin cloth under it, on the damp mud floor. He had little clothing and no bed. His parents were too poor even to have a lamp that would give light enough so we could see around the room in which he lay. His home was made mostly of mud, and had no windows. Indeed, it was a dark, dismal place. A candle was brought and lit enabling us to see where we were.

The casket in which the body was afterward laid, was made of cheap wood and covered with white cloth. A bouquet of white flowers tied with white ribbon, was placed on top of the little form. A short service was held after which the remains were taken and buried to await the great resurrection.

We miss him. He is now with Jesus. His translation has given the school a deeper interest in heaven. Thank God for open doors in India, to missions, and for the glorious opportunity to reach these children born in heathenism, and teach them the way of Jesus Christ our Lord.



CHAPTER XIX.

The Dhobi.

THE DHOBI is the washerman of India. In America we speak of the laundry, a place where clothes are washed, while in India we speak not so much about the place or room as we do about the man who does the work. In Igatpuri, we have a number of houses given over to dhobi occupants. The dhobi enjoys living near others of his caste; therefore, where one is others will be found.

India's washerman has some utensils that Noah left. He uses mud stoves, rough sticks for racks, and any rough stone will do for a washboard. Before we left New York city for India, we pur-

chased a small washboard with hopes of introducing something better than a stone in washing clothes. Our hopes thus far have been blighted, as they are not slow to give us to understand, though it is in a meek, mild way, that what is good enough for their renowned ancestors is good enough for them.

The dhobi commences his wash in a peculiar way. He has a brass vessel two feet in diameter and eight inches deep which is nearly filled with water. Then some soap or **khar**, a sort of salt mineral, is added to the water, and the vessel placed on the mud stove and securely cemented in with mud. A few sticks are placed across the top of the vessel and the soiled clothes piled upon them, oftentimes reaching as high as five feet. Covered over with many blankets, the fire is started, and in this way the clothes are steamed for about five hours.

When the steaming process is completed, the clothes are taken to some brook and beaten upon stones. He takes them by one end and bringing them over his head, lets them come down at a rapid rate

on the stone thus removing the dirt, which he has taken in hand to eradicate from the garment. But the one is so closely mingled with the fibres of the other—the one is impalpable, the other bulky and substantial, and so the torrent of his zealous rage unconsciously turns against the very substance of that which he sets himself lovingly to purge and restore to its primitive purity. Indeed, we sometimes find that while he has wrecked the garment, he has overlooked the dirt! Greater and better men have been employed in the same way.

Such are consolations of philosophy,

“There was never yet a philosopher
Who could endure the toothache patiently,”

so what can we expect from our dhobi even in patient Hindustan?

Howbeit, let us go on with the wash. The bluing is carried on in the same manner as in America, and the starching as well, though our starch is made from rice. Racks and lines are used in holding the clothes for drying, the latter being so arranged that there is no need of clothes pins which we deem necessary in the



THE DHOBI

homeland. There is a certain twist they give it through which one end of the garment can go, which twist takes the place of pins.

One day as we were walking through a field near the mission, where several dhobies had lines filled with clothes, it began to rain. We noticed each dhobi run toward his lines, and beginning at one end they ran the length of each, taking every garment as they ran. Since the poet says,

“The Englishman hustles the Aryan brown,

And the Aryan hustles the Englishman down,”

we would scarcely imagine that land of no ambition excelling Europeans, much less hustling America, in anything. But this clothes line is certainly better for India than those of western nations would be, for when a heavy storm comes up during the monsoons, had the dhobi to remove pins he would never have time to get his clothes in before the rain caught them.

Well, the dhobi is an interesting personage. Someone has likened him to a puppy rending slippers, a child tearing up his picture books, a mongoose killing

twenty chickens to feed one, a free thinker demolishing ancient superstitions,—saying lastly: “What are all these but dhobies in embryo?” and we feel quite the same as this writer does evidently about him, especially as we open up the battered garments he has just brought from his torture chamber, which have been ploughed through with his big charcoal iron lengthwise, crosswise, slantwise and every “otherwise”—with now and then a glimpse of long black streaks and spots where glowing cinders have dropped on their tenderest places.

But we shall not worry over this for, perhaps, the next time before the damaged articles reach their homes, they will have gone the rounds and some kind little body will have mended them up nicely, while we content ourselves by wearing a substitute that the same good dhobi has bestowed upon us because of having no education to enable him to read the markings or to remember which is which (even though he has marked most of them himself right in the most conspicuous place, with an everlasting ink).

Then the dhobi has a trick of hiring out clothes. You cannot evade the necessity for clean shirt fronts, ill able as your precarious income may be to meet it. In this or any other connection, the dhobi finds you garments of the best quality at so much an evening, and you are saved all risk and outlay of capital. In this way, the wealth of the rich helps the want of the poor, without their feeling or even knowing it (usually)—an excellent arrangement, of course.

A missionary missed some articles of clothing, especially a blouse. She had expected to wear it at a gathering in the village in the evening, but lo, it could not be found when the dhobi brought the clothes. However, she donned another blouse and on her way to the gathering, found a native woman quite well dressed strolling along, and thinking she saw something familiar about the woman, looked closer and found her wearing the missing blouse.

Well—done, undone, ripped, torn, patched—**salaam**.

CHAPTER XX.

Little Assuria.

MY LITTLE Assuria! Let me show him to you. Only a tiny Hindu child—once the pet of the family; but the famine came, that dread famine with no mercy right nor left—grasping everything in its reach. Among the other thousands, Assuria's home was stricken and one's heart wrecks with pain as he, between sobs, rehearses the terrible incidents relative to the family.

Sisters sold for a few pice each, and sent away to be used for immoral purposes. Torn from their famishing loved ones, the few pice buys a few more ounces of rice for a day or so more of life; then

death clutches the remainder of the family.

Assuria remembers the last pile of human bones he saw the government servants rake up and burn at that village; and well he should, for his mother, though a Hindu, fond as any mother of her baby boy, was in the burning.

It is all too dreadful. The bones crackle, sizzle, burn; and he and his elder brother realizing what it meant to the full, started out in search of something to sustain life—but for the most part, to steal away from the sound of that horrible fire that stole all there was left of their mother dear.

Only a few mornings before she had crept around as best she could on hands and knees and picked up grass seeds for their breakfast—none for herself—but oh! I must stop talking about her. Imagine the worst—it is none too terrible for those famine times.

For several days these two little famine waifs subsist on the few remaining leaves of the tree and grass seeds that they find now and again, but at last the brother

succumbs, and little Assuria (for I have yet to tell you he was scarce more than five years old) wends his way alone.

Finally, gnawed with pangs of hunger, famishing of thirst, for there was a famine of water as well as of bread, he begins to eat dirt, earth, anything—and lays down to die.

But we found him. Yes; barely more than a bundle of bones, with the skin drawn down tightly over them; a mass of sores—his stomach filled with stones—in the last stage of starvation—feet and limbs swollen, reminding us of a passage in Holy Writ which reads like this: “Forty years didst thou keep them in the wilderness, so that their shoes waxed not old and their feet swelled not.”

But Assuria was not one of those fortunate “kept” ones. He had never heard of the One who “keeps.” His heathen god was one that destroyed rather than “kept”—one that loved a human sacrifice above all other offerings—thirsty always for blood.

Poor child! How often the first few days—yes, weeks, the little lamp of life

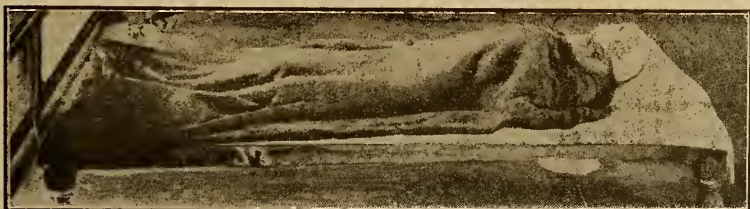
seemed to be flickering its last, but with careful nursing and a morsel of food now and again (for we gave but little lest we should overfeed him), we brought him back to life. A year passes by, a few months more and he stands at my side, a round, bonny face and big bright eyes that bespoke sorrow. He was among the number that I never remember seeing smile, though he was one of our best Christians.

It was next to impossible to keep him from storing away a portion of his food. With his appetite half satisfied, he would steal away to his cot, and tucked down in under the little blanket would be found enough food for a meal or so ahead. He lived ever expectant of famine. His brown eyes often filled up with tears as we remonstrated with him over this habit, and it was one of his greatest griefs if one of the boys stole his hidden treasure from the cot.

In devotional exercises in school, in Sunday school, church and village meetings he was very attentive, and gave ev-

ery evidence in daily life of being a Christian.

One of our pleasures those days was to hear him tell how he turned from idols to serve the living God, and hear him repeat in his native tongue one of his favorite passages which seemed ever to be his thought in summing up what Christ had done for him: "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me." We seemed then to lose sight of the long, tedious, weary hours we had spent in watching and caring for him, and forecast the time when the Saviour would say something of the same to us when we stand around the great throne.



IN THE HOSPITAL

CHAPTER XXI.

A Marvel.

HAVE you ever seen a twenty-five pound stone lifted by the eyes? We have. A native juggler came to our door one morning to perform. He says, "Sahib, if you will give me four annas, I'll lift that **patthar** (stone)," pointing to it, "with my eyes." It was not the lightest load for one to carry to the steps where he stood, but we brought it.

He pulled a strong fish cord from his pyjamas, fastened it firmly round the stone, slipped the other end in back of his eyes, secured it there and began slowly, slowly to pull upward.

We were just about to have him give

up the attempt, for fear he would injure his eyes permanently, when, believe me,



we saw the stone had been raised a foot from the ground!

With a triumphant, heroic look, gladly enough he let it down again, slowly—brought his hands forward (which meanwhile had been folded back of him), removed the cord and pushed his eyes back into the sockets. They were somewhat bloodshot but otherwise quite all right, which was one of the greatest wonders we had yet run across in this half-hatched civilization.

He earned his four annas (eight cents) in a comparatively short time as that is the average day's wages for a good workman.



CHAPTER XXII.

Grinding at the Mill.

GRINDING at the mill is no new topic before the world. It has been heard of and seen from thousands of years back up to the present. Samson experienced it while in the prison at Gaza; Isaiah prophesied it as a judgment to come on the daughters of Babylon and Chaldea. Jesus Christ our Lord has said: "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left."

"Grinding at the mill" has been given over to the women. It makes no difference whether the grinding is for the home circle or for the merchants in the bazaar, it is a sort of "Let the women do the

work." The masculine sex feel themselves above this particular line of labor.

Low wages are attached to this as well as all other native employment, especially since women are the employees. In Bombay Presidency we pay for grinding at the rate of one cent for two pounds of wheat or corn, one and one-half cents for two pounds of rice, one-half cent for two pounds of **dhal**. Should the grinders be working by the day, they receive about six cents.

Grinding stones vary in size. Some are made for one woman to operate, and again some which are used during festivities require as many as fifteen women to turn them.

Along the streets during the heat of the day the grinders may be seen at work, seemingly not minding the tropical rays of the sun. As the old mills grind, they send forth weird sounds which are often accompanied by minor strains from their human propellers, for indeed, most of India's music is in the minor key.

Mothers with their babes in their laps grind as well as others. The babes enjoy

the “sound of the grinding” (Eccl. 12:4) giving the old mill a look now and then, with a few winks between, and fall asleep as though rocked in a cradle.

All that some folks see as they gaze at the grinding of the mill is wheat, rice, dhal, etc. Others’ attention is drawn to the turning, the peculiar sounds, the operators, the babies, etc., but there are still others of us who notice not only all the above and more, but seem to hear the old mill stones crying out, “Be ye also ready.”—Matthew 24:44.



CHAPTER XXIII.

A Christmas Across the Deep.

JUST as the clock strikes twelve another Christmas peeps into our lives. The midnight hour gives way. We are in the weights of slumber. The eyes are still heavy. Yet we must awake, though the previous day has been one of toil, as this season of the year is the time of house cleaning, whitewashing, preparing presents, and many duties attendant a holiday of this kind. Awake? Yes. What awakes us? Are we in the home land? What do we hear? It sounds like a male quartette in America. But our surroundings are like that of India. Listen!

“What more can he say than to you
He hath said,—
To you, who for refuge to Jesus have fled,”

floats out upon the night air. It is a surprise to us, for we did not know that four of our native Christian boys were so well versed in English, but they sing in excellent harmony and continue to sing,

“While shepherds watched their flocks by night
All seated on the ground,” etc.

We are awake and up for the day. The morning sun is welcomed. We are all dressed in white; nature is clothed in her green; the air carries an unusual fragrance; the people are remarkably happy. This is Christmas in India.

Bring the hammer and we'll open the box sent from America to the mission. The whole village is interested. Here is the postman, the sweepers, cooks, bakers, policemen, washerman, water carriers, school teachers, masons, shoe makers, carpenters, merchants, ayahs (native nurses), in short, they all come. We soon learn that “this is the missionaries great day,” and we are expected to make gifts

to all who ask in remembrance of the birth of our Saviour. We will do the best we can with what is at hand.

The box, which is much appreciated, is opened. Presents sent to the native Christians and fellow missionaries are distributed first. Our hearts are made glad and knit closer to our home people. The wayfarers and villagers receive their portion. It is not only a time of giving temporal things, but 'mid the giving are proclaimed the glad tidings of a Saviour, who was given to redeem mankind.

The Sunday school children have not been forgotten. Thank God! there was a suitable gift for each dusky face. The naked were clothed, the hungry fed. Their little faces beamed with joy; they laughed, they sang, they leaped.

The church doors swung open and the house was soon filled to the full. Christmas services were held. Our aged native minister preached the sermon, which was full of life, helpful and very instructive. Seed was sown in many hearts which will tell in years to come of its fruitage for the Christ of Bethlehem. After the service

scores of children ran through the village lanes declaring what they had heard. It was a wireless message and soon reached the station of every human soul round about.

The day is far spent and we are now ready for the Christmas dinner, which awaits us in the dining room. Look at the spread, so different from the regular routine: Canned peaches from the United States, a plum pudding from England, a fruit cake from a Eurasian friend, suet dumplings from a Goanese, mutton chops from a Mohammedan, buffalo milk from a Hindu, and last but not least all sorts of India sweets from our native Christians. We are well filled and there is food to spare.

Retiring to the drawing room, the evening is spent in visiting, after which we enter the evening circle of prayer and are greatly blest again from the throne of God. Good night.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Bible Scenes in India.

1. CARRYING BEDS.

I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.—Mark 2:11.

The majority of India's people carry their own beds with them. On the streets, in the fields, in the trains, in the hotels, in the ditches, yes, everywhere we find that bundle. As a rule, their beds weigh from one to ten pounds, so they can easily be carried. Even as invited guests, we take our beds with us and be sure of a place to sleep when night overtakes us.

2. TOWERS.

And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it.—Isa. 5:2.

To try to find a planted field in India without a tower, would be as great a task or greater, than trying to find a needle in a large hay stack. The towers are made of bamboo, straw, sticks, palms and the like. The capacity of these towers is to hold one person. The watchmen from these elevated huts are heard in the night seasons crying, “ram, rice, ghi,” etc., and by so doing expect to keep away thieves. The missionaries, as they look upon these towers, are often reminded of the saying of the Psalmist, “The Lord . . . my high tower.”

3. TREADING OUT THE CORN.

Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.—1 Cor. 9:9.

Over 3,350 years have elapsed since the above command was given. To this pres-

ent day the "land of the trident" uses the walking machines for threshing the grain the same as our forefathers in the time of Moses. A stick is set quite firm in the ground; around the stick is strewn the grain that is to be threshed; one or more oxen are tied to the stake, which march round-and-round and tread out the corn, helping themselves to a mouthful now and then. Though the ox may eat many morsels per day, yet according to 1 Tim. 5:18 it is all right for the laborer is worthy of his reward. Of course, our brother preacher sees a point in this scene.

4. SALUTING FORBIDDEN.

Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hands, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any man salute thee, answer him not again.—2 Kings 4:29.

The government peons that carry the British India mail to villages that are not situated near a railroad, run on a "dog trot" style to villages. They are not supposed to salute any one—that is, shake

hands, bow, hug, kiss or talk. If one salutes another that much time is lost, and in carrying mail there is no time to lose for the "king's business requires haste."

5. ROCK IN A WEARY LAND.

As a shadow of a great rock in a weary land.—Isa. 32:2. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.—Ps. 61:2.

The great rocks are like wayside inns to the weary traveler, for there is no shade like that of a rock. Shade under a tree is oftentimes dangerous, as a tree is not as able to shade one from the tropical rays of the sun. The shadow of a rock is cooler than that of a tree. It is no infrequent sight to see natives, who live in the western ghat region, resting their weary bodies in a rock's shadow. We have Christian natives who flee to these shadows for rest and prayer after a hard battle with the enemy.

6. EMPTY, SWEEPED, GARNISHED.

He findeth it empty, swept and garnished.—Matt. 12:44.

Everything is removed from the house, it is entirely emptied; then they take a harsh, stiff broom and sweep it, after this and unmentionable processes of cleaning, the house receives all sorts of markings with lime and chalk which is the oriental garnishing.

7. UNDER THEIR OWN VINES.

They shall sit every man under his own vine and under his fig tree.—Micah 4:4.

The jungle huts are built near each other, very frequently with vines over the front entrance and a fig tree in the yard. This enables every man to sit under his vine or tree and visit with his neighbors. Many times have we sat under a vine or tree in the village meetings and witnessed those of the surrounding huts as they gathered under their respective places to listen to the truth of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XXV.

Bible Scenes in India.

8. WOMEN AT THE WELL.

The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep.—John 4:11.

It is no infrequent scene to find a number of native women at the wells of our India cities, especially so in the morning and evening hours. Where we lived there were a number of wells. Some were given over to one caste of people and some to another caste. There have been times when we were quite thirsty, nevertheless, we did not dare to take water out of certain wells because we did not belong to the Marathi caste. We might have forced

our way and taken the water, as it has been done in some cases to our knowledge, but desiring to see the people saved, did not feel at liberty to cause any trouble; therefore, went thirsty for several hours.

As a rule, the women go to the wells to get the water for the native homes. They carry their own bucket and rope to draw the water. If we were there and desired a drink, about the first thing we would hear (if we did not have a bucket and rope), "Thou hast nothing to draw with and the well is deep." The next we would be informed that we were Americans and Christians, and should have no dealings with the Hindus. The third information is at hand and we are told that if Christians should touch their vessels it would defile them. It is a sort of a case of "touch not, taste not, handle not." At this point the missionary opens the good Book to John 4:3-23 and cries aloud that there is "a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

9. MOTH, RUST, THIEVES.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures

upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.—Matt. 6:10.

It may seem strange to class the three under one head, especially at first thought. Yet, it is not. They all belong to the same order of undesirable Knights. They all take what belongs to other people; they all go where they are not wanted; they all come, many times, when one is not expecting them; they all cause multiplied trouble; and leave behind a record not to be desired.

The Trident possesses a moth that is gifted with the ability of organizing. They come in armies and conquer before one is aware that they have arrived. Rust arrives and is no small factor on the scene. In our locality during the monsoons, pins rust in a man's vest, hairpins rust in ladies' hair; hat pins rust so they cannot be used; yes, everything that is of iron or tin goes into the rusting business.

Thieves, last but not least, are there. So many are "born to be thieves." There is no one quite like the fellow that is born to steal. Born to steal may be put in oth-

er words—stealing religiously. If we should ask, “Why do you steal?” the answer would be, “I am born to do that, and it is no sin unless I am caught at it.” In Bombay there is what is known as **chor** (thief) bazaar. This is where the thieves take their stolen goods and dispose of the same. The white face may be seen at this bazaar seeking his lost goods, and, if found, the same may be purchased for the second sum of rupees (money). We all think that we do well to pay for our belongings once; twice over is once too often.

10. CLAY USED AS MORTAR.

Draw thee water for the seige, fortify thy strong holds: go into the clay, and tread the mortar, make strong thy brick-kiln.—Nahum 3:14.

About the first thing to do when there is a wall to be made, sheds to be erected, houses to be built, floors to be put in, is to draw water. The next in order is to get baskets to carry the clay in and coolies to carry the baskets. With hoe, water, clay,

baskets, sticks, stones, and the like, we are ready to build. When the natives of the land find their walls, houses, sheds or fences getting a little weak, they get some more clay and water and mix up the same with their feet and repair the weakened parts. This is going into the clay and treading the mortar. We have noticed in some of our journeys that all of the clay is not burned in the kiln. To burn all the clay and make burnt brick would be too costly; so only those used on the outside walls, houses, etc., are burned; those that are used on the inside are only dried in the sun, something similar to that of the adobe of our own land.



CHAPTER XXVI.

An Old Man's Sacrifice.

ALL DAY long the people had been coming with their offerings to the goddess Kali. Lambs had been slain by hundreds—the best of the flock, without spot or blemish if possible, before this great goddess who demands the sacrifice of blood,—for blood she must have, even to the blood from the veins of her devotees.

The missionary stands rolling it all over in his mind, thinking of what such a faith must mean. He thinks of how many pilgrims have tramped through long, weary journeys, measured their length for hundreds of miles to reach this god-



HINDU FAKIR

dess and appease her anger toward them.

As he muses there is a jostle and the crowd pushes aside. The air is filled with excitement. The missionary moving toward the path that leads from the temple gate to the idol, stops and looks. The priests, who fall heir to the offerings, draw up closer to the idol, greedily watching the object before them.

It is a pitiful sight. An old man—bent with age—decrepit, his hands clasped as though holding something very precious, he comes nearer, nearer and nearer the idol. This surely must be a precious offering, thinks the missionary, as he sees the benighted old man with slow, feeble step nearing the idol.

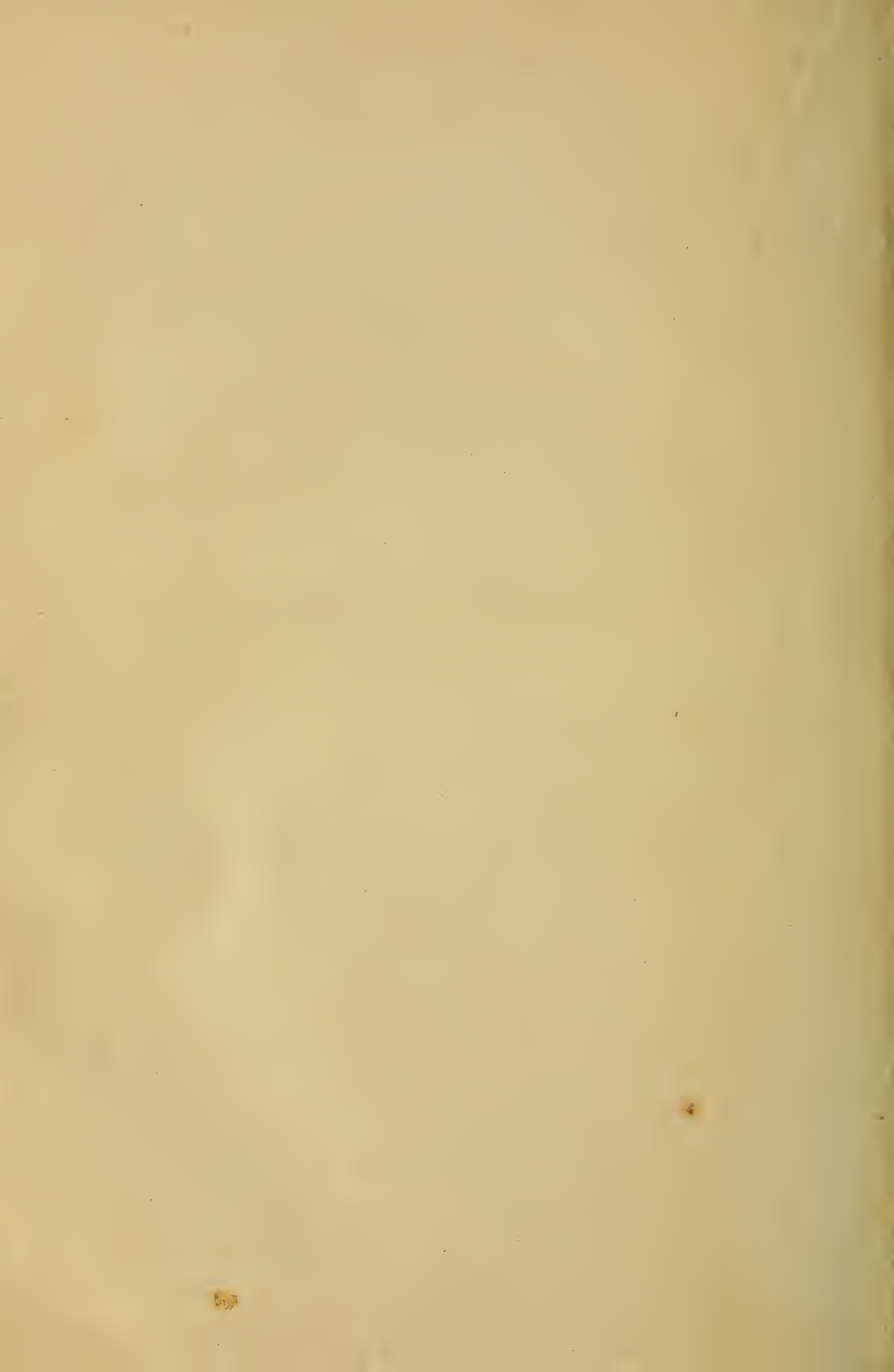
Eyes of all are turned upon the scene. He comes, comes still nearer and finally reaches the altar—with tears falling, devotion beaming in his eyes, hands still clasped. He bows, falls on his knees, unclasps his hands, and what should fall out before the idol but his tongue, all covered with blood! He had cut out his tongue—yes, his tongue—as an offering to this goddess to appease her anger, ever typical

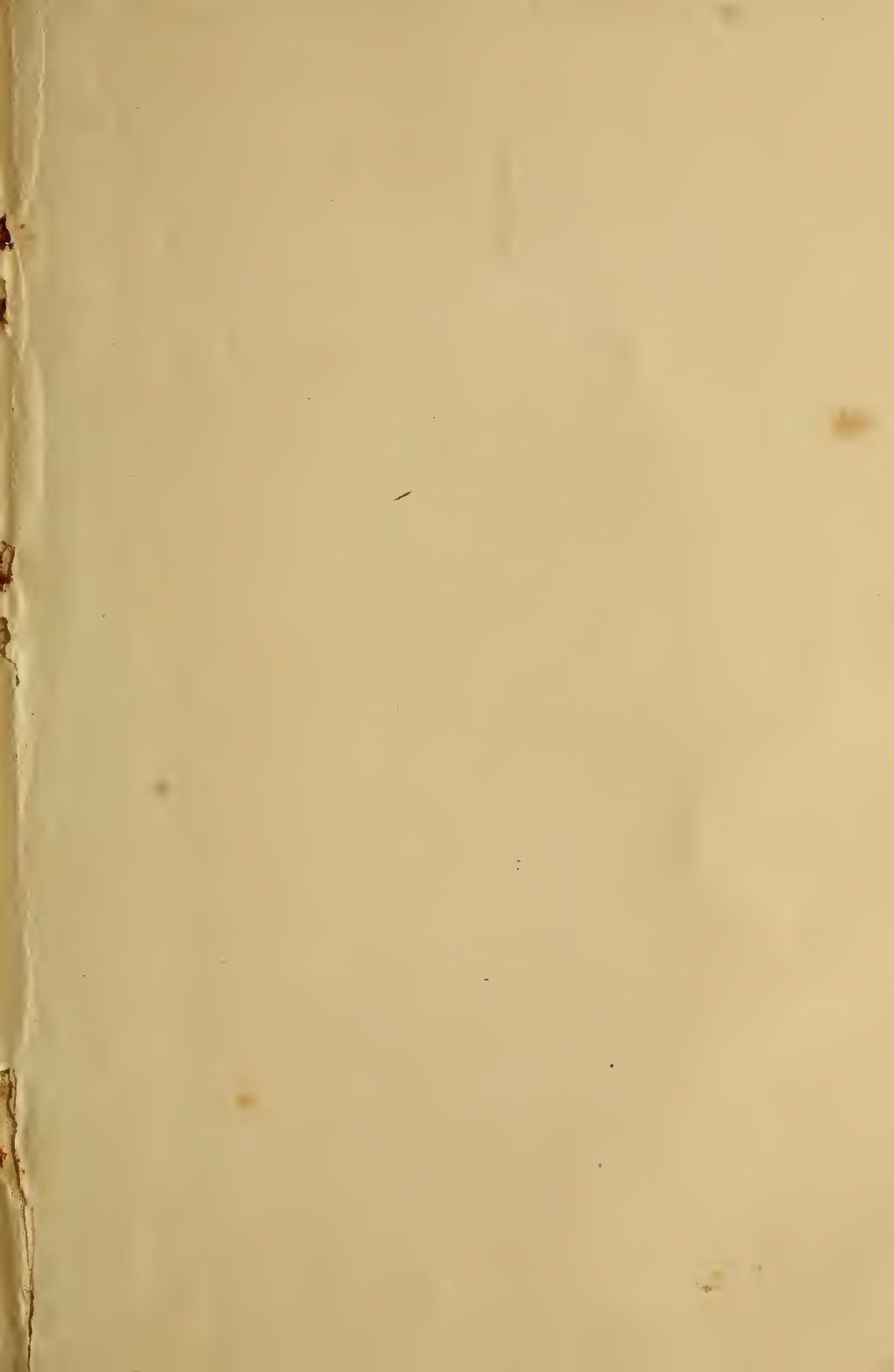
of the heathen's offerings to their gods. They offer the very best of whatever they have to offer. If a lamb, the best lamb; if too poor to offer only a flower, it is the best flower.

The missionary's heart was broken as he saw the disappointed look on the old man's face, after his offering to the goddess. He turned to him, saying:

"I know you can't speak, but if you have never heard of Jesus Christ, kindly shake your head three times," and with tears still streaming down his face, the old man's head slowly moved from side to side. He had never heard.







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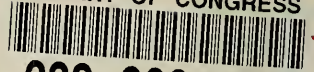
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